

To: Members of the Public Health Committee

Re: HB 6676 AAC Licensure of Clinical Social Workers

As a hospital social work director with over 100 social work staff, I am writing to ask for your favorable vote on HB 6676. This bill will allow facilities that hire professional social workers to recruit and retain staff in the approximately 3 year period between the time they receive their master's degree and the point at which they can apply for the LCSW.

It is my experience that such new graduates without this level of licensure are at a definite disadvantage when they seek employment. Most employers now seek staff with some type of external validation of their credentials. This bill would put Connecticut on a par with nearly every state in the country, including MA, NY, and RI in offering this provision.

HB 6676 is also a needed consumer protection measure that prevents new graduates from entering private practice until such time as they have their LCSW. This is the standard of practice nationally and is endorsed by social work professional organizations.

This bill will enhance human services in Connecticut, improve employment opportunities for graduates of Connecticut's public and private schools of social work, and protect consumers from underqualified practitioners. I urge you to support HB 6676.

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